

Case Study



Vaccine manufacturer and University align to partner on novel clinical studies

Sanofi Pasteur and the University of Melbourne have entered into an agreement to co-fund Proof-of-Concept studies - which are core to the University's capability and of strategic interest to Sanofi Pasteur - covering programs in infectious diseases, microbiology, and immunology, in a project running from 2014 to 2017.

Sanofi Pasteur (SP) is the Vaccines Global Business Unit of Sanofi, the world's largest manufacturer of human vaccines, making it a great match for the research strengths of The University of Melbourne (UoM) in immunology and infection, and creating positive global partnership through a novel funding mechanism.

Given the strong alignment of interests between SP and UoM, it is not surprising that the collaboration has been very productive and several outstanding projects were identified. The collaborative culture of both organisations will continue to underpin new projects and future products in infection and immunology.

SP and UoM agreed to develop programs of mutual interest that will be based on criteria including novelty and applicability for vaccine development. The agreement specifies that joint project teams from SP and UoM will collaborate on the development and execution of specific programs. SP will have the first right-of-refusal to acquire exclusive, worldwide licenses to develop and commercialize the technology, and the first project falling under this agreement was announced in December 2016, with Dr. Adam Wheatley as the Principal Investigator.

University of Melbourne's Dr. Adam Wheatley from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the Doherty Institute was the inaugural recipient of funding for his proposal, Development of antibodies for broad protection against influenza B. The proposal was selected by the joint Committee from 10 applications and will receive \$200,000 jointly funded by the partnership. The project aims to develop influenza vaccines that can extend coverage beyond the single year that is currently available.

The funding will assist Adam and his team to identify novel monoclonal antibodies that might have use as either a novel clinical intervention to prevent severe influenza or otherwise provide clues on how to design the next generation of influenza vaccines.

"It's been really invaluable to gain access and some insights into the minds of industry surrounding the vaccine space in infectious diseases and I'm looking forward to a productive and fruitful collaboration moving forward," said Dr. Adam Wheatley.

Russell Jacobson, General Manager Sanofi Pasteur Australia/New Zealand said, "Influenza infections have a major impact globally, both morbidity and mortality-wise. While we have good vaccines, there's room for improvement because seasonally we have to make new ones so we're hoping this project will go some way to find the silver bullet."

Case Study



University of Melbourne Professor Elizabeth Hartland, Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor, Research and Partnerships and External Relations, said the agreement between Sanofi Pasteur and The University of Melbourne provided a rare opportunity for academic researchers to develop a close relationship with industry and to develop their commercially focused arm of their research under the guidance of such an important player internationally.

This Proof-of-Concept Fund is just one of several links in commercialisation with The University of Melbourne, but it represents a new chapter in deeper and faster engagement in product development in vaccines based on University research.

Key contact for further info:

Kerry A. Hegarty, Ph.D. | Business Development Director
Research, Innovation & Commercialisation | The University of Melbourne
T: +61 3 8344 2017 M: +61 401 188 639 E: kerry.hegarty@unimelb.edu.au

Website URL:

www.unimelb.edu.au
www.sanofipasteur.com/en